

**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES (CDSS) AND
TRIBAL TANF ADMINISTRATORS MEETING
SUMMARY**

**November 17, 2009
744 P Street, Room 1031
Sacramento, CA
1:30 pm – 4:30 pm**

This document summarizes the key issues discussed at the meeting between Tribal Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Program Administrators and leaders and CDSS representatives on November 17, 2009.

A summary of the last Tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Administrators meeting on July 14, 2009 was reviewed and approved as written.

1. The Governor's Budget.

Kären Dickerson, Chief, Employment and Eligibility Branch, reviewed the upcoming budget and gave a brief overview of the process. The Governor and his staff believe that the recession is not over and that California will need more time to recover. However, while there were no known proposals to cut funding or make changes to the Tribal TANF programs (TTP), it was expected that there would be changes to the CalWORKs program. California may however, experience more cash flow problems and the next fiscal year could see the issuing of "IOUs" again.

Chairman Avila of the California Tribal TANF Partnership (CTTP) asked if state allocations were in fact federal money. Ms. Dickerson explained that the state allocations to the programs were state general fund monies and that federal monies were distributed directly to the programs by the federal government. There was a brief discussion regarding the challenges stemming from delays in the state allocation and Ms. Dickerson stated that CDSS was trying to get the State Controller's Office to enable Tribal TANF advances to be paid even if a budget has not been signed (e.g., planning allocations). Jorge Lopez, Washoe Tribal Administrator, commented that "safety net" cases could not be served with federal dollars and would have to be terminated if state funds were not available. A question about "rolling over" state funds was also advanced and the programs were informed that that would require legislative action.

2. Census Bureau Presentation – Pam Ames.

The presentation by PG&E has been cancelled and will be rescheduled.

Pam Ames of the Census Bureau emphasized the importance of Native American communities being counted accurately and acknowledged that previously this community had been under-counted. She noted that the Census 2010 forms would contain only 10 key questions rather than the "long-form" used in Census 2000. She

described the process by which the census forms would be distributed and that every effort would be made to hire Native American census workers to cover the Native American community and to perform any follow-up, door-to-door efforts to ensure a more accurate count.

3. Department of Child Support Services –George Chance.

The Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) reported on the Child Support Directors conference held in October. He noted that because of the need to train staff, two workshops were held at the conference that concentrated on the relationship between DCSS and Tribal entities.

The Owens Valley Career Development Center staff partnered with DCSS on one of the workshops with the goal of forging a new relationship between the TTPs and DCSS to work together to provide child support enforcement services in a timely, efficient and culturally sensitive way. The second workshop centered on building alliances between the TTPs, Tribal entities and DCSS. Many favorable evaluations of the workshop were submitted by the attendees. In a follow-up to the issues raised in the last Tribal TANF Administrators meeting, DCSS reported that the Local Child Support Agencies (LCSA) had been informed that they must enforce child support orders issued by Tribal Courts. He also suggested that the TTPs develop memorandums of understanding (MOU) with their LCSAs to alleviate any misunderstandings regarding their respective responsibilities.

4. Miscellaneous Questions and Issues.

Glenn Basconcillo of OVCD provided a short update on MEDS access from the TTP perspective noting that the TTPs are continuing to work on the justification elements. He also said that they would be submitting the application and justifications so that they can be placed in the MEDS-Lite queue.

Phyllis Iwasaki reported on the exchange of information letter to be directed to Tribal TANF Administrators and the counties. She told the programs they would be sent a draft in December 2009 for their review and comments and that the target for final release of the letter was January 2010. Robert Hopkins of Torres Martinez stated that the counties do not enforce their own policies and procedures regarding information sharing and sought help from CDSS in enforcing those policies. Ms. Dickerson stated that CDSS could act as a facilitator in supporting the relationship between the TTPs and the county and assisting in the information-sharing process.

Update: The draft has been delayed by two to three months due to workload and resources.

Phyllis Iwasaki explained that the MOUs were due to be renewed for the period from July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2013. Draft copies were provided to all approved TTPs present at the meeting so that their Tribal Councils could review and approve them in

advance. Jorge Lopez of Washoe asked if changes could be made. Ms. Dickerson explained that MOUs were templates with language that had been pre-approved by the TTPs in previous MOUs and that the CDSS legal department had reviewed all the pertinent language and citations. It was explained that any changes would require extensive reviews and approvals by all the TTPs and CDSS. Suggestions approved by all the TTPs would be welcome but could substantially delay the approval process and the July 1 effective date could not be met.

Update: The MOUs have received necessary intra-Departmental sign-offs and will be prepared for mailing to Tribal TANF programs for signature around February 28, 2010.

Glenn Basconcillo of OVCD reported that the TTPs were informed by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) that due to changes in the Work Participation Rate reporting system, the 2006 and 2007 WPR recalculation created a decrease in the work participation rate for TTPs. He asked if the state had the same problem or if they had been apprised of any changes. Ms. Dickerson stated that she had not been informed of any such changes.

The coalition of TTPs that meet on the Monday preceding the Tribal TANF Administrators (TTA) meeting, would like to see future agenda topics to include a focus on collective issues such as changes to the CalWORKs program that may affect Tribal TANF applicant/recipient increases or decreases. Further, the coalition would like to see the Fraud Bureau come to the TTA meeting and talk about the possibility of providing some assistance in fraud prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution. Glenn stated that even with evidence, county district attorneys were hesitant and often refused to prosecute fraud cases involving Tribal members and Tribal programs.

Update: A presentation from the CDSS Fraud Bureau is scheduled for the February 9, 2010 Tribal TANF Administrators meeting.

5. Dates for Next Tribal TANF Administrators Meetings.

The next meeting date is as follows:

- February 9, 2010
- June 8, 2010
- October 12, 2010

The Tribal TANF Administrators/CDSS meetings will be held at 744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814 in room 1031 from 1:30 pm – 4:30 pm.

ATTACHMENTS

- Sign-in Sheet

